

## NEWS

# Jayalalithaa threatens mass agitation over Tamils pain

ACCUSING the Indian and Tamil Nadu governments not acting to curb the "violation" of civil liberties in Sri Lanka, AIADMK leader Jayalalithaa Jayaram has threatened to launch a mass agitation.

In a statement released in Chennai on Tuesday September 22, Jayalalithaa urged the Congress led Indian government to "ensure life and dignity" of Tamils imprisoned in various camps in the island.

According to Express Buzz, Jayalalithaa said that the AIADMK and people of Tamil Nadu expect the Centre to raise its voice against the human rights violations in the refugee camps in Sri Lanka.

If the Centre does not act immediately, "the AIADMK, along with like-minded political parties, will be forced to launch a mass agitation to focus world vision on the brutal civil liberties violations in Sri Lanka."

The former chief minister said "The gruesome footage, reportedly filmed by a soldier on a mobile phone camera, reinforces my earlier claim that civil liberties are non-existent in Sri Lanka and that the Tamil population there is subject to barbaric atrocities at the hands of the Sri Lankan Army."

## SLN assaults Tamil Nadu fishermen

TWENTY-FOUR fishermen from Keechchaangkuppam in Naarkoayil area in Tamil Nadu, fishing in Kanniyaakumari seas in five boats Friday night, were brutally assaulted and cast naked in the seas by Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) soldiers. SLN soldiers had beaten the fishermen on their heads with the ice blocks taken by the fishermen to preserve their catch, TamilNet reported. Fishermen in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu saved the 24 fishermen who managed to swim ashore on Saturday, September 26 and admitted them in the local hospital.

SLN soldiers had threatened to open fire on the fishermen, driving them into the sea. Their clothes, fishing nets, outboard motors, ice knives and the fish they had caught had all been confiscated by the SLN soldiers, the fishermen said.

"Sri Lanka claims to be a democratic country, where the rule of law prevails. No democracy sanctions this sort of summary mass execution, where human dignity is wantonly trampled upon," she added.

Jayalalithaa said the AIADMK has never been a votary of terrorism or terrorist outfits. "I have personally been a very vocal critic of the LTTE, ever since that outfit degenerated from being valiant fighters for the liberation of Tamils into a terrorist organisation that annihilated political opponents, murdered anyone who did not toe their line and heaped suffering on the Tamil people whose cause they were claiming to espouse." Reported the Express Buzz.

"Even assuming that the persons being shot dead in the footage telecast were LTTE activists, executing them summarily without a trial is barbaric, inhuman and contrary to civilized norms. It also violates international law relating to treatment of prisoners of war."

Slamming the DMK government in Tamil Nadu, she said "As such, the AIADMK does not expect the DMK government to even make a whimper of protest against the atrocities."

Tension prevails among the fishermen in the coast of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu fishermen had just called off their continued boycott of fishing demanding Tamil Nadu government to take action against SLN for shooting fishermen from Tamil Nadu side of the seas. Their fellow fishermen being assaulted and driven naked has aroused the fury of Tamil Nadu fishermen. Colombo government is encouraged by the appeasement policy of Karunanidhi government 'not to anger the Sinhalese', commented fishermen circles in Tamil Nadu.

Meanwhile, a Sri Lankan court remanded 17 fishermen from Rameswaram to judicial custody at the Anuradhapura prison on Friday, pending trial on October 1. The SLN detained the fishermen for crossing the international maritime boundary line.



Tamil Nadu opposition leader J Jayalalithaa has threatened public protests over Sri Lankan Tamils

## 'Political controversy stops World Tamil Conference'

THE Tamil Nadu government has decided to postpone the Ninth World Tamil Conference, it planned to hold in Coimbatore in January 2010, following a political controversy with opposition parties questioning the locus standi of the government to organise the event as well as its timing.

A committee headed by Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, which reviewed the progress of the meet, took the decision to enable participation of more Tamil scholars from across the world as they needed time to plan their travel, an official release said.

Parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, have said that the ruling DMK should first ensure the return of Internally Displaced Persons lodged in various camps in Sri Lanka to their homes as they are presently "linguishing behind barbed wires".

Jayalalithaa Jayaram, the leader of AIADMK, attacked Karunanidhi for organising the World Tamil Conference, when Tamils in Sri Lanka and other parts were in a state of distress.

In a statement released in Chennai, Jayalalithaa said the conference 'is nothing but a farcical charade for self-aggrandisement' and 'like all utterances of Mr Karunanidhi, this one too smacks of vested interest and has nothing to do with his self-proclaimed love for Tamil language'.

She questioned the DMK gov-

ernment's locus standi to host the conference and its timing, saying Tamils were in a "state of distress" all over the world, particularly in Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

Malaysian Tamils, who hosted the first International Tamil Conference in 1966, feel that they are relegated to the status of secondary citizens in that country.

The Tamils of Sri Lanka, who hosted the fourth International Conference in Jaffna in 1974, were living in refugee camps in

their own country.

Their struggle for self-determination was ruthlessly snuffed out by the Sri Lankan Government with military aid and logistical support from an Indian Government, of which Karunanidhi's DMK party is a key constituent.

However, Mr Karunanidhi never raised his voice, let alone his little finger, when the massacre of the Sri Lankan Tamils was on, she alleged.

## Citizenship promised

Times of India

IN a significant decision, the Tamil Nadu chief minister M Karunanidhi, on September 26, said he would take steps to ensure that the Centre granted citizenship to the more than 100,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in the state if they desired so.

He made the announcement at a function bringing down the curtains on the year-long centenary celebrations of C N Annadurai in Kancheepuram, the DMK founder's birthplace.

Earlier, the DMK passed a resolution requesting the party

chief to take steps to ensure that the Tamil refugees in the state were given the option of citizenship under the Indian Citizenship Act.

As many as 73,572 refugees have been staying in 115 camps across Tamil Nadu and more than 30,000 reside outside the camps in different parts of the state. Following the end of the Eelam war and defeat of the LTTE, there has been much apprehension among the refugees that they would be sent back home against their wish.

The announcement comes as a relief, representatives of Tamil groups said.